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ABSTRACT

This book on educational standards describes how standards create more harm than good, and it takes to task the pro-standards movement. The volume opens with a discussion of what is wrong with standards, claiming that the push for standards generally results in long lists of facts that are freighted with cultural baggage and are typically the product of individuals who lack classroom experience and who believe that all children should be expected to learn the same material, irrespective of a child's ability or interest. The book focuses on standards in English and literature and provides numerous anecdotes to illustrate children's individuality and how standards will undermine this uniqueness. It criticizes standardized tests, the exaggerated promises of packaged curriculums, the use of Ritalin, and the push to make teachers into a uniform body of instructors with similar intent and similar methods. It discusses the hype behind standards and demonstrates how many claims for standards do not withstand close scrutiny. Some of the other aspects of standards that are criticized are the strategy to repeat basic information in the same way, trying to develop students that reflect the standards and not themselves, and the negative influence of California's education standards. (RJM)

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